

this order, shall ever be kept sacred and inviolate. To all this you pledge your lives, your fortunes, and your sacred honors, so help you God, and keep you steadfast."

Of this order there were and are in Maryland, State and subordinate councils, and lodges in various quarters, the members of which take, or have taken, and assumed upon themselves, according to the rank or degree they hold or held in the order, one, two, or all the above recited oaths or obligations, as this minority are advised and believed would have been shown, by full and perfectly reliable oral proof, had the Committee summoned before them and examined on oath the witnesses named to them for that purpose. This minority, then, feel well-warranted in answering the first branch of the inquiries enjoined upon the Committee, which is, "Whether any, and if any, what secret political societies exist in this State?" by saying that, according to the best evidence the nature of the case will admit of,—under the restricted exercise of the powers confided to them, resolved upon by the majority of the Committee,—there was and is a secret political society in this State styled the *Know Nothing society or order*, and latterly sometimes called and titling itself the American Party.

The second point of inquiry enjoined upon the Committee was, "Whether any political society, secret or open, is known to encourage or pursue purposes which tend to the subversion of the well established and deeply cherished principles of our government?"

To this the response at once occurs, that there are no better "established" nor more "deeply cherished principles of our government, State or national, than those of *civil and religious liberty and equality amongst its citizens*—principles which have been over and over again declared and proclaimed to be fundamental by the first settlers of this State, by the sages and patriots who led us triumphantly through our revolutionary struggle, by those who framed and those who adopted the federal constitution, as well as those who organized and adopted the constitution of Maryland, and until very recently, cherished in the hearts and nourished in the devoted affections of the whole American people. But, sad to say, when we turn to the oaths and obligations just quoted, we find there set forth as part and parcel of those oaths and obligations, several stipulations and provisions at war with these sacred principles, and which, if carried out, not only tend to the subversion of, but actually subvert those principles! See the stipulation or sworn pledge in the oath of the first degree, not to vote nor give influence for *any men*,